

City of Cambridge – Recycling Advisory Committee

November 10, 2005 - Minutes taken by Kelly Dunn

Present:

Justin Adams, MIT; Kelly Dunn, Recycling Program Manager; Rob Gogan, Harvard University; Cornelia Herzfeld, Cambridge resident; Cathy McCormick, Cambridge resident; Randi Mail, Recycling Director; Judy Nathans, Cambridge resident; Anne Wasserman, MIT

MIT “40% by 2005” Update

Justin and Anne talked about their recycling program, and why their recycling rate continues to go up from 5% in 1999 to their current rate of 36% (38% for first quarter Fiscal Year '06). Trash has decreased 2000 tons since 2001. Some highlights of how MIT has achieved this:

- Financial decision-makers are on board with program and understand savings
- MIT president has stated environmental goals for the year
- Inspection of dumpsters
- WasteCap partnership led to more management of compactors & haulers
- Increase in waste reduction
- Big success with toner cartridge recycling—techno trash too
- Good team effort and new staff hired
- On-campus “Working Group Recycling Committee” making significant impact with outreach and participation programs (Recycling Ambassadors Program/Collaboration with Office Depot/Clean Out Your Files events/The Bale newsletter)
- Custodial training continues to be a large part of the program.

Harvard “40% by 2005” Update

Rob gave an update on Harvard’s program, and why their recycling rate is at 43%. An interesting twist at Harvard is that each building chooses their cleaner. Therefore, Harvard Facilities competes with the typical pool of vendors. Rob pointed out that their recycling rate doesn’t include construction and demolition debris as MIT does.

- 85% of buildings use Harvard services.
- In job description for Harvard custodians, every mention of trash also means recycling.
- There’s been a slight shrinkage in paper recovery→cardboard down 10% from 2 years ago. Might be from less packaging from decline in desktop computers (more laptops means less packaging).
- Green Campus Initiative→ Harvard Recycling partners with the Green Campus Initiative to reduce waste and promote recycling. The GCI has collaborated with others at Harvard to pledge official commitment to six Sustainability Principles. See www.greencampus.harvard.edu/about/principles.php
- Go to get to 50% recycling rate by 2005. Might get there for the month of November or December.
- Composting continues to rise—Harvard Business School has about 1.5 tons each morning that Herb’s Disposal picks up.
- Rep program has been highly successful (similar to block leaders)
 - 15 reps, one part-time coordinator.
 - Activities include tabling, flyering, involvement with waste audits, and meetings with dorm-mates and housemasters.
 - Program started in graduate schools this year.